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## **GO SERV TO DEVELOP PILOT PROGRAM TO COMBAT HOMELESSNESS**

*Focus will be on greater outreach to foster youth*

**SACRAMENTO**—Chuck J. Supple, Executive Director for the Governor’s Office on Service and Volunteerism (GO SERV), announced today the creation of a pilot program aimed at engaging more foster youth in national service programs, such as AmeriCorps and the California Conservation Corps, as one strategy to combat homelessness in California. Governor Gray Davis recently convened a summit on homelessness, one outcome of which was the charge to develop this pilot initiative.

“Homelessness isn’t something that can be fixed overnight, and it isn’t something for which there is only one answer, but several. Our role will be in developing an outreach program designed to enroll greater numbers of emancipated foster youth into stipended service programs, like AmeriCorps and the California Conservation Corps,” said Mr. Supple.

Each year, thousands of young people are emancipated from the Foster Care System in California. By some estimates, up to 50% of emancipated youth end up homeless, and many young people who are products of the Foster Care system become involved in drug abuse or prostitution.

National service programs such as AmeriCorps and the California Conservation Corps can provide a positive experience for emancipated youth who stand to benefit from knowing they are valued and have something worthwhile to give back to society. Such programs offer members meaningful, community-based service opportunities and provide members a chance to play an important part in addressing critical needs in education, health and human services, public safety and the environment.

“We believe that recently emancipated foster youth could stand to gain substantially by participating in national service programs, because these programs provide people with the opportunity to learn new skills, as well as providing nearly \$5,000 for college” said Mr. Supple.

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